

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above-referenced application are respectfully requested.

I. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-3 and 6-11 are cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim 4 is amended herein.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4 and 5 are currently pending and under consideration in the present application.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-3 AND 6-11 UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(A) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER UCHIDA ET AL. (US 4,890,824) IN VIEW OF SCHUPP (DE 37 16781 A1), MARTIN ET AL. (US 5,508,500) AND OWENS ET AL. (US 6,371,368 B1)

Claims 1-3 and 6-11 are cancelled herein.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

III. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

In item 4, on page 5 of the Office Action, claims 4 and 5 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 4 has been rewritten in independent form, and claim 5 depends from claim 4. Therefore, it is submitted that claims 4 and 5 patentably distinguish over the cited prior art, and define allowable subject matter.

IV. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that each of the claims patentably distinguishes over the prior art, and therefore defines allowable subject matter. A prompt and favorable reconsideration of the rejection along with an indication of allowability of all pending claims are therefore respectfully requested.

Serial No. 09/747,967

Docket No. 122.1429

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: 7-15-04

By: Derrick R. Fields
Derrick L. Fields
Registration No. 50,133

1201 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501